

FLATBUSH WANTS POLICE DOGS BACK; ONLY ONE LEFT NOW

Four-Footed Cops Won Confidence of Section by Fine Police Work

Despite official denials residents of the Flatbush section of Brooklyn appeared to be convinced today that yesterday's action of the Sinking Fund Commission, in rescinding the lease of property at Ocean and Foster avenues where the kennels have been located, means that the work of police dogs in Flatbush has come to an end.

Flatbush's dog force has dwindled gradually until only one dog is left. Two out of eleven dogs were sold, five were carried off by an epidemic of pneumonia and three were transferred to the Richmond Hill district.

Deputy Police Commissioner Leach said he had "no disposition" to abandon the use of the dogs and Commissioner Enright said he "never contemplated" such a thing.

"The people of Flatbush," Mr. Enright said, "believe the dogs prevent burglaries and protect those who live in detached houses and I don't see why I should discontinue the service."

But Flatbush, pointing to the rescinding of the lease of the kennels and the dwindling of the force of four-footed cops to a lone one, is not convinced.

Police dogs have been on duty in Flatbush since 1908 and have assisted in running down culprits and fleeing "suspects." Flatbush tells many tales of their efficiency.

BIPED COP PRAISES QUADRUPED ASSISTANT.

"It would be almost impossible to get along without the dogs in this precinct," said a Flatbush desk lieutenant. "This is one of the biggest in the city, and there are many unfinished houses where thieves and burglars could hide to wait until the man on post has passed by before going on with their criminal errand."

With the dogs on the job they steer clear of such places, for the dogs can detect the presence of a stranger even though they cannot see him, and they set up such a barking that nine times in ten a man must come out of hiding and offer to give himself up to the policeman with whom the dog is coupled on the tour of duty.

"Every patrolman has orders that he must go clear around all vacant houses on his post. In summer some of the men have fifty to seventy-five vacant buildings to watch, and the dogs have been trained to make the circle and bark a warning if they detect a stranger anywhere around. It would be impossible for some of the men to cover their posts without the aid of the dogs."

The dogs have figured prominently in the work done in the Flatbush section ever since they were introduced. Patrolman Mike Neiberg, an old-time "cop," who put in eight years on the Dog Squad, says the dogs justify the expense of keeping them every night. "Some of the things they have done are almost incredible," he declared. "Two years ago an auto was stolen from the curb over on Church Avenue. A policeman saw the machine speed away just as he was informed that it was stolen. He started a police dog after it and the dog, overtaking the speeding auto, jumped on the front of it and frightened the thief into halting and surrendering."

"At another time a patrolman was informed that a couple of hoodlums were breaking electric light globes. When he got within a block of them his approach was discovered and the mischiefmakers ran. The dog followed and, after tripping one, brought the other to a stop."

A BRILLIANT PIECE OF WORK BY ONE OF DOG SQUAD.

The greatest piece of work the members of the Dog Squad like to tell of is the capture of a negro who had shot two detectives. That happened about eight years ago. The two detectives had spotted the negro acting suspiciously in the latter class residential section of the district and concluded to follow him. He led them on a long walk, and when he finally brought up in front of the Snyder Avenue Station House one of the detectives told him he had gone far enough and could bring his promenade to an end by turning to the left and entering the building. Quick as a flash the negro drew a revolver, turned and fired twice. Both policemen dropped and the culprit took to his heels. There was a swarm of policemen on the scene in a minute but the negro had disappeared.

Twenty minutes later Patrolman Thomas Smythe arrived on the scene with dog April. The dog was started off in the direction the negro had run and in less than ten minutes he led his master and several other cops to a lumber pile in which the would-be murderer was hidden, fully a quarter of a mile away. The negro was sent to Sing Sing for a long term. The four left of the original eleven dogs in the squad, are named Tess, Fritz, Judy and Belle.

The dogs are of the German shepherd species. They were trained by Sgt. Hickey, who took them when they were about nine months old and he trained them so successfully that they were able to go on patrol seven or eight months afterward.

The building the city has surrendered as a kennel was equipped to accommodate twelve or fifteen dogs. It required several policemen to take care of it. So, in the interest of economy, the surviving quartet was transferred to the station house, the lease was surrendered and there are now several more policemen available for patrol duty.



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